

KOR
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
ON THE RECORD UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED (DPC 227)

SS AND RADIO BRIEFING TRANSCRIPT, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1962,
2:45 P.M., E.S.T.

MAHNING: This is for immediate release. (P.R. No. 645) It is message Ambassador Stevenson gave to U Thant in New York a few minutes before two.

I thought just to keep it straight, I would explain the nature this. This is not a quarantine regulation; in other words, it is not an addendum to the quarantine itself. What it is, is a clarification for U Thant and, if he passes it on, for Chairman Khrushchev of the area which he, in effect, has promised to stay out of, to keep his ships out of. We are simply making this delineation available to the Acting Secretary General.

The implication then, you are making this available, is that any crash that occurs within this area will not have been the fault of the United States?

Well, Chairman Khrushchev has said, as this points out, that he intends not to put his ships in the area and we are trying to give an official clarification of what we think it is.

Is this the same area that you had before?

It never was specifically defined and it is being defined for purposes of this discussion of the so-called modalities, as U Thant calls them.

Never defined before?

Not in the --

Only what had been up to the Navy?

Well, the Secretary of Defense designated what areas he wanted but that was sort of left to his operational commanders.

That's the sum of it.

Q. Does this mean that United States warships are operating throughout these two areas?

A. That's my presumption. The actual naval information, I don't have, but in order to maintain a quarantine, I think we have to presume we are maintaining it in roughly that area.

Q. Has anyone totaled up how many square miles or any other thing that that includes?

A. Well, you would have to know the amount of overlap. You can get the area of each of those circles but then you have to get an equation of the area of overlap.

Q. I'm sorry I asked. I thought somebody had a handy answer.
(inaudible)

Q. There is a formula for that. It is about the third or fourth year of advanced algebra.

Q. Have American ships intercepted any Soviet or Soviet-chartered vessels which have come through the Panama en route to Havana or other Cuban ports?

A. Not to my knowledge. The only ones I know about are the ones that have been announced.

Q. Coming across the Atlantic instead of from the south

Q. There's a picket line to the south, isn't there?

A. I literally don't know the naval arrangements.

Q. What's the place out there to the right, that island?

A. That's Puerto Rico.

Q. Puerto Rico.

Q. What, east of Puerto Rico?

A. Well, actually this line, which is approximate, goes through the eastern tip--just to the right of San Juan.

Q. This is rough?

A. This is supposed to be 500 nautical miles, and this is rough.

(Examination of map--tape inaudible)

Q. The blockade area, the interception area runs to the northern tip of South America, the northern part of the Florida peninsula, the eastern tip of Puerto Rico and the center of the Gulf of Mexico?

A. That's about right, pretty close to the center.

Q. Mr. Khrushchev is going to be surprised to find what a large area he agreed to stay out of.

Q. Do you have any comments on any other events of the day?

We will be glad to give you wide publicity.

MR. REAP: In about ten minutes we will have another press release for you on naviserts.

Q. Have you got that written out, I hope?

A. It is a press release, yes. I will have someone down to answer questions.